

# U.S. N-Tests Called Needless

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Announcement that the Mr. Fisher is quoted by the United States is close to per- Associated Press as saying: "As feeling the so-called 'neutron you know, we have already bomb' helps focus the dis- made significant advances in armament debate on its funda- the direction of tactical weap- mental issue—do the risks of ons with a smaller [fallout- producing] fission as compared of the spread of nuclear weap- with fusion component."

One of the arguments of test ban critics, such as Sen. Thomas J. Dodd (D) of Connecticut, has been that continued testing is needed to prevent the Soviets gaining military advantages over the United States with such a weapon.

Now, in a letter to Senator Dodd, Adrian S. Fisher, Deputy Director of the United States Disarmament Agency, has said that the United States has made enough developmental progress toward such a weapon to obviate the need for further testing.

This letter, dated March 14, was made public Monday.

It is not immediately clear whether Mr. Fisher is talking literally about the "neutron bomb" or about "clean" hydrogen bombs that could be developed into a neutron weapon.

## Early Steps Recalled

As generally described, a neutron bomb would be a hydrogen fusion weapon much of whose energy went into lethal, but nondestructive radiation. It would be primarily neutron radiation. There would be no significant lingering radioactivity or radioactive fallout.

A clean bomb, on the other hand, would simply be a weapon with no fallout. It still would be a blast and heat producing destructive weapon.

In his letter to Senator Dodd,

This describes merely a "clean" bomb.

## Risks Weighed

However Mr. Fisher also referred to this as "an enhanced radiation weapon." Thus the disarmament official obviously was discounting the need for testing to develop a neutron bomb regardless of the technical classification of the specific weapon he was describing.

He said that the administration had taken into account the state of development of these weapons in arriving at its negotiating position with the Soviets.

Thus it would seem that the administration's statement of clean bomb progress has done little more than water down the neutron bomb as an argument in favor of testing. This is probably all it was intended to do. It has not stemmed the attack of test ban critics.

These critics basically want testing for its own sake. They distrust the Soviets and do not take the threat of nuclear proliferation as seriously as do test ban advocates.

In the last analysis, the test ban issue is a matter of weighing these two types of risk against each other. All other questions raised are merely to support each side's contention that the risk is considerably greater.